

The Maine Farmer: An Agricultural and Family Newspaper.

Maine Farmer.

Augusta, Dec. 26, 1874.

TERMS OF THE MAINE FARMER.
\$1.00 IN ADVANCE, OR \$2.00 IF NOT PAID WITHIN
THREE MONTHS OF DATE OF SUBSCRIPTION.

Postage Free to all Subscribers.

All payments made by subscribers will be credited on the yellow slips attached to their papers. The printed date in connection with the subscriber's name will be the date to which he paid, and will constitute, in all cases, a valid receipt for money remitted by him.

A subscriber desiring to change his post office direction or to discontinue his paper, must communicate to us the name of the office to which it has previously been sent, otherwise we shall be unable to comply with his request.

Collectors' Notices.

McG. C. Atger is now calling upon our subscribers at their houses.

Mr. A. D. FOWLER, of Lakewood, is our authorized agent for Nova Scotia, and will call upon our subscribers there.

Mr. W. H. MORSE, of Worcester, will call upon our subscribers in York Co. during the winter.

Mr. J. P. CLARK will call upon our subscribers in Eastern Somerset and Piscataquis counties.

To our Subscribers.

The new postal law, requiring the payment of postage at the time of mailing, will affect all newspapers and other periodicals sent to subscribers (except to those who have paid in advance), and will take effect on the 1st of January, 1875. This will impose an unwelcome and in many cases a severe tax upon us, and we trust that our subscribers will meet the additional cost of postage. There would be no injustice or hardship in exacting this tax from us, as we are compelled to pay the postage, and they would pay no more for the paper than we do. Our publishers, by this means, might exempt themselves from an additional annual expense of twelve to fifteen dollars.

But we do not propose to resort to this, preferring rather to bear the additional expense ourselves, in the hope that the good will and fidelity of our patrons in making up to us the loss by a greater proportionate contribution will induce our friends to extend the circulation of the paper, and thus offset the additional cost of all concerned.

It will therefore be understood that from and after January 1, 1875, unless and until the present law shall be repealed, the *Maine Farmer* will be sent to all subscribers at the regular price of **75 CENTS POSTAGE**, making a saving to each of our patrons of twenty cents per annum.

In doing so, however, we shall be compelled more strictly to enforce the published terms of the paper, it is to say, that **75 CENTS** is not paid within three months of the date of subscription, we trust, by all our fast-minded patrons, when they are informed of the fact, that the paper will be discontinued. We are now in arrears for the paper for various periods of time, and we trust to you to bear a sense of responsibility of which prompt payment on the part of delinquent subscribers will make valuable improvements in the paper.

The good intentions of the publishers in this direction, notwithstanding the larger increase in their expenses, will be apparent to all who are reading them.

It is to be hoped that the paper will be continued to us, and to the state, by our subscribers.

All persons in arrears who still send us the amount due, shall receive credit for all past indebtedness, and for a year's subscription in advance.

THIS OFFER EXPIRES UNTIL THE 1ST OF JANUARY, 1875. All persons holding this offer of free, or by mail, to our authorized agents previous to that date, will be credited in accordance with the terms above stated.

The Transit of Venus.

This rare and remarkable astronomical event, in which the scientific world has been so deeply interested, was witnessed, as we learn by telegraph from the several points to which the different expeditions were dispatched by the several governments of Europe and this country, with, on the whole, very satisfactory results. The most favorable points of observation, were in Japan, Australia, India and China, although the view was in nearly every case more or less interrupted altogether, or obscured, by clouds.

The expeditions sent out by the U. S. Government, seems to have been quite successful in their observations as any others.

A dispatch received from Prof. Davidson, the chief astronomer of the American expedition to Nagasaki, Japan, says the weather on the day of the observation, Dec. 8, was unusually cloudy and unpromising, and the time at which it was calculated the transit would begin passed away, so that the observers were unable to record the exact moment of the first contact of Venus with the Sun with trustworthy results. But after about a quarter of a hour, and before the planet had passed the station of its greatest contrast, the clouds cleared, and the observers were quite successful in taking measurements with the micrometer of the distance between Venus and the Sun's western edge. In all, about two hundred micrometric surveys and measurements were taken, besides about sixty excellent photographs of the transit, during various periods of its occurrence.

The objects and advantages for scientific purposes of these observations of the transit of Venus, is the passage of the planet across the Sun's disc between the earth and the Sun, are thus familiarly and briefly stated by a writer in one of the daily papers. They are:

Chiefly to verify present figures on the distance of the earth from the sun, or, if that is not possible, to correct, and to ascertain the true distance. This determined beyond cavil, as it is reasonable to expect it will be by the expeditions now prepared for the work, we have a basis for calculating the distances of other celestial bodies may be determined. The distances of many of these are given in our text books. If the calculations of the distance of the sun from the earth 95,000,000 are correct, the distances of other astronomical bodies may be assumed to be correct. But if a slight error has been made in the basic measurement, there are great errors in the calculated distances of the fixed stars. And to show how widely have differed calculations of the mean distance and the figures of past authors.

Of the series of early calculations of the distance of the sun from the earth, 14,000,000 miles was determined by Kepler, who, however, revised his calculations later, and found that it could not be less than 20,000,000. Dr. Halley, who reached a similar conclusion by calculation of the transits of Venus, in the years 1677 and 1761, found the mean distance to be 96,000,000. Cassini followed with a further increase to 85,000,000. Eddington gave figures which were used in our calculations of 93,000,000. The men who reached these conclusions worked with duller instruments than the observers of to-day are accustomed to. It is very difficult to measure the diameter of the sun, and the trust. Since 1789, this is the first opportunity that has occurred for determining whether or not the trust has been ascertained. It is evident that another 100 miles in the distance from the sun would make a difference of 300,000,000 miles in calculating the distance of the nearest star.

The determining of the distance of planets and fixed stars is not the only benefit to come of the observation of the transit. The science of navigation to be perfected thereby; and this alone is of sufficient importance to warrant the efforts that are making.

BURNING OF A MAIL STEAMER. A dispatch has been received by the Pacific Mail officials, giving information of the burning of the steamer *J. W. Johnson*, of the 17th inst., 60 miles out from Yokohama. The chief engineer, seven Chinese crew, and one lady passenger, arrived at Hong Kong in one of the ship's boats. The other boats made for land about 12 miles distant. It is feared that many lives were lost. The Japanese are an old wooden ship insured for \$150,000 in English and French companies. A dispatch to the State Department says that the loss of life was fearful. The mail was sworn in office.

CITY NEWS AND GOSSIP.

A Merry Christmas to all our readers.—The nomination by the President of H. H. Hamlin, Esq., our excellent postmaster, for a second term of four years, has been confirmed by the Senate.—The good results of the labors of Rev. Mr. Binda of the Winthrop Street Universalists Church are amply attested, the interest in the Sabbath School, the pleasant parish gatherings and a united and harmonious society.—The numerous customers at Rose's jewelry establishment are to be congratulated upon the return of Mr. Horn, after a long absence, to the desk which he formerly made himself so useful and popular.—Hon. R. D. Hice is now in Washington, upon business connected with the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, of which he is Vice President.—The children connected with the Mission Sunday School of the American Young Men's Christian Association, are to have a Christmas tree and supper at the rooms of the Association on Christmas eve (Thursday). Contributions for the tree and table are solicited.—Jas. W. Bradbury, Esq., has been appointed a commissioner to take testimony to be used in presenting claims before the Court of Commissioners of Alabama Claims, now in session in Washington.—The Sunday School connected with the Granite Church are to have a Christmas festival.—Daniel C. Robinson, Esq., has recently been appointed commissioner for the State of New York to take proof and acknowledgment of deeds and other instruments to be secured in said State.—The Kennebec river is frozen over both below and above the dam sufficiently strong for the passage of teams.—The Ladies Aid Society of the Winthrop Street Universalist Church has contributed \$25 for the furnishing of a room in the State Industrial School for Girls.—A fall of a couple of inches of snow on Tuesday, followed by a slight rain in the evening has very much improved the sleighing in this vicinity.—Superintendent Harris has nearly completed his annual brushing up of the State House, including some such needed improvements for the comfort and convenience of the members, preparatory to the assembling of the Legislature in January.—Our streets have been very lively during the past week, and the stores of the vendors of Christmas gifts have been thronged with people.

The special religious services at Rev. Mr. Penney's church during the last week have been attended by a marked degree of interest.—The name of Mrs. George S. Carpenter of this city is to be added to the list of general donors to the Industrial School for Girls.—She contributes \$25 to furnish a room in the institution.—The usual Christmas services are to be held in St. Mark's Church.—A Christmas tree will blossom and bear fruit on Friday evening at the vestry of the Free Baptist church for the benefit of the children of the Sabbath School—Water is being introduced into the High School House from the Augusta Water Works.

There has been for some time a growing conviction in the public mind that the Beecher-Tilton case will never come to trial. Powerful influences seem to be at work to prevent it. On the part of Beecher's counsel every legal device has apparently been resorted to, and thus far successfully, to postpone the trial, from term to term, until the patience and means of Tilton and his friends are exhausted and they shall be compelled to abandon the case in sheer despair of justice. The recent settlement of the Proctor-Moulton libel suit, in which the plaintiff is contented to confine what she presents, upon the simple admission on the part of Moulton, that he knew nothing of the story except as it was told to him by his attorney, is an illustration of the tactics resorted to keep the whole matter out of the courts. Alided by powerful friends and keen-witted lawyers, Mr. Beecher may be able to do so, but he will not find it easy by this means to satisfy the public that he is an innocent man.

Among the most valuable of our exchanges is the Bangor Daily *Whig* and *Advertiser*, which will commence its forty-second volume with the new year, and a new typographical equipment. The *Whig* is a live paper, second to none in the State as a medium of the latest and most reliable news, and has never been managed with greater ability in the editorial department than now. Capt. Bouteille always yields a keen and vigorous pen, and although zealously partisan in his temperament, whether pitching into an unfortunate political opponent, or as a supporter of a favorite candidate for Senator, or of leading a bold venture in the field of politics, he is always a credit to the paper.

Among the new books for the holidays to be found upon Horace North's counter, the following attractive and interesting volumes by popular writers have just been received: "Caleb Krindle, a Story of American Life," by Carleton; "That Queer Girl," illustrated, by Virginia F. Townsend; "Sowed by the Wind, or the Poor Boy's Fortune," one of the Forest Glen Series, illustrated, by Elijah Kellogg. Those who have not made up their lists of holiday presents will find these books admirable for the method of speculation.

In remitting his present and coming year's subscription, one of our best subscribers in Somesbury county uses the following appreciative and encouraging words: "I take this opportunity to congratulate you upon the approved appearance of the FARMER, which I consider (although not owning a road of land) my best paper, next to my

The Kennebec Journal is slightly in error in stating that the debt of the Maine Central Institute has been reduced from \$331,000 to \$18,000 during the past four years. Only a trifling difference of some eight thousand dollars between its figures and the fact. We really hope our neighbor will try and be more careful in his statements.

The Annual meeting of the Maine Editors' and Publishers' Association will be held in this city Jan. 20th and 21st. The meetings will be purely of a business character. During the session a reception to the members of the Association will be given by Mr. Quinby of the *Gospel Banner* at his residence.

Subscribers will bear in mind that we have extended the time in which arrears may be paid to entitle them to the benefit of our offer, to the tenth of January, 1875. We do this to enable them to send the money by the hands of members of the Legislature; and this alone is of sufficient importance to warrant the efforts that are making.

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The Katie King HOAX. The *Atlantic Monthly* for January contains a long and interesting article from the pen of Robert Dale Owen, in which a circumstantial account is given of some wonderful spiritual phenomena witnessed by him in Philadelphia during the past summer, the reality of which he endorses in the most positive manner. Through the mediumship of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Holmes, the girl of a young girl named Katie King claimed to be the daughter of a pirate who died two hundred years ago, made her appearance at the night-sitting, and, with the assistance of a medium, submitted herself to be touched by the prompt administration of medicines her life was saved.—Mrs. Margaret Gammon died at Winthrop December 12th, aged 89 years. She went out recently, and not coming in again as she ought to, was searched, and was found with her hip broken, an accident which so fitfully clung to the Union in its darkest days. No screaming shell burst from its granite walls on its errand of death; no grim Merrimac darted out from the wood-inlets to impede our progress. So still is sea and air, one cannot realize that this was once the scene of terrible conflicts. The forests on the low, sandy shores are buried in their tinted colors. Occasionally we pass little light-houses standing above the water, on posts driven into the sand-bank below, looking so frail and fragile, that one might expect an angry wave could easily wash them away.

Fair Play; or, The Test of the Lone Isle, is the second volume of the new and complete edition of the popular works written by Mrs. Emma D. F. N. Southworth, now in press by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia. Mrs. Southworth's novels have become very popular, and they have great merit as works of fiction, and provide a great deal of pure and healthy entertainment to thousands of readers. The present edition is unusually fine, being handsomely bound and printed in large, clear type. Fair Play is complete in one volume of 700 pages, and was at once popular, and they have great merit as works of fiction, and provide a great deal of pure and healthy entertainment to thousands of readers. The present edition is unusually fine, being handsomely bound and printed in large, clear type. 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